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Shay Bilchik, Administrator

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JUVENILE JUSTICE BULLETIN

Community Policing and Youth

Jeff Slowikowski and Helen Connelly

Defining Community Policing

"The police are the public and the public are the police" was the primary principle established by Sir Robert Peel in 1829 when he founded the London Metropolitan Police Department (Braiden, 1992). Consistent with this principle, community policing forges a working partnership between the police and the community to solve the problems of crime and the fear of crime and disorder, thereby enhancing the overall quality of life in their neighborhoods (Bucqueroux, 1995). Policing has undergone many changes since the early 1800's, yet public safety remains the primary mission of police departments nationwide. At the same time, the emphasis on the community in policing has never been greater than it is today. Law enforcement organizations across the country have embraced the principles of community oriented policing. Since 1994, more than 9,000 law enforcement agencies have received grant funds from the U.S. Department of Justice's (DOJ's) Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) to establish or enhance community oriented policing within their agencies. As of mid-May 1999, COPS has provided funding for 100,000 community police officers across the Nation.

Community policing should be viewed not as a program to be implemented, but as a philosophy to be adopted. A police department or sheriff's office that simply creates a specialized community policing unit is not fulfilling the principles of community policing. Instead, the agency must embrace the philosophy and principles of community policing from the chief,



From the Administrator

To prevent and combat crime, we must work as a team. Since law enforcement forms the front line of our defense against crime and violence, the forging of productive partnerships between police officers and citizens is critical to our success and lies at the heart of community policing.

Over the past 5 years, some 9,000 law enforcement agencies have been awarded grants by the U.S. Department of Justice's (DOJ's) Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) for the purpose of funding an additional 100,000 community police officers across the Nation. In 1994, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention joined forces with COPS and DOJ's Community Relations Service to develop the Youth-Focused Community Policing (YFCP) initiative.

This Bulletin describes the goals of that initiative, which is being implemented by Empowerment Zone and Enterprise Community sites in Boston, MA; Chicago, IL; Houston, TX; Kansas City, KS; Los Angeles, CA; Mound Bayou, MS; Oakland, CA; and Rio Grande Valley, TX. Examples of initiatives supported through YFCP are provided.

The YFCP initiative can strengthen community efforts to prevent and reduce juvenile crime by building an effective partnership between police and citizens and promoting a comprehensive collaborative approach to problem solving that benefits all concerned.

Shay Bilchik
Administrator

commissioner, or sheriff down through the ranks to every sworn officer and nonsworn employee. Most important, the community must share in assessing problems and selecting and implementing appropriate solutions. As members of the community, youth must also be included in this process.

Juvenile Crime and Victimization

In December 1998, Attorney General Janet Reno released figures drawn from the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI's) Uniform Crime Reporting Program showing that juvenile arrests for violent crimes were down 4 percent from 1996 to 1997. This marked the third consecutive year of decline in juvenile arrests for violent crimes (Snyder, 1998). Additionally, juvenile arrests for murder decreased 39 percent between 1993 and 1997 (Snyder, 1998). However, juvenile crime and violence continue to be major concerns in communities across the country. The number of arrests for violent juvenile crime was still 49 percent higher in 1995 than in 1988. Between 1980 and 1987, firearms were used in a little more than half of all homicides involving a juvenile offender. By 1994, firearms were involved in 82 percent of homicides committed by juveniles (Snyder and Sickmund, in press). The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's (OJJDP's) Program of Research on the Causes and Correlates of Delinquency has substantiated that the chronic juvenile offender is responsible for committing a significant portion of juvenile crime (Huizinga, Loeber, and Thornberry, 1995). While the 1997 statistics show hope for the future, they clearly indicate that a significant amount of work still must be done.

Although juvenile crime and violence statistics are alarming to old and young alike, the latest available victimization statistics reflect that young people are disproportionately impacted by victimization and fear of crime. Between 1985 and 1993, murders of juveniles ages 12 to 17 increased approximately 125 percent. In 1997, the rate remained nearly 33 percent higher than in 1985. Homicides of younger juveniles (ages 0 to 11) increased approximately 25 percent from 1985 to 1993 and remained about 10 percent higher in 1997 than in 1985 (Snyder and Sickmund, in press). "In 1995 and 1996, juveniles were twice as likely as adults to be a victim of a serious, violent crime and three times as

likely to be a victim of simple assault" (Snyder and Sickmund, in press). According to the National Institute of Justice, of the 22.3 million adolescents between the ages of 12 and 17 in the United States, almost 9 million have witnessed serious violence (i.e., homicide, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault), 3.9 million have been victims of serious physical assault, and 1.8 million have been victims of serious sexual assault (Kilpatrick and Saunders, 1997).

Addressing Juvenile Crime and Victimization at the Local Level

Serious and violent juvenile crime is most often the result of a long series of events. Within these events lie opportunities for better prevention, intervention, and control. Taking advantage of these opportunities requires a comprehensive, community-based strategy that integrates key criminal justice, human service, and grassroots organizations in identifying the problem and developing the solution. Community leadership and investment from established institutions—law enforcement, schools, probation and parole, courts, neighborhood and civic associations, churches, businesses, and service organizations—are also key in effectively addressing juvenile crime and victimization at the local level.

During the past several years, law enforcement agencies have played an increasingly important and visible role in juvenile crime prevention and intervention as part of their overall community oriented policing strategies. Through community policing, local jurisdictions are working to reduce crime and disorder by carefully examining issues and concerns in their neighborhoods and applying problem-solving strategies to address them. As a result, public safety strategies are increasingly focused on providing comprehensive, targeted, and community-based services and support to prevent and reduce juvenile crime and victimization.

In December 1994, Vice President Al Gore asked several Federal Community Empowerment Board member agencies to support the Clinton Administration's Empowerment Zone and Enterprise Community (EZ/EC) jurisdictions through the development and commitment of program resources.¹ Although the EZ/EC program is jointly funded by the U.S. Departments of Agriculture and Housing and Urban Development, it is not a typical Federal program. The

program was conceived as the first step in rebuilding communities in America's poverty-stricken urban centers and rural heartlands. Improving public safety in these economically depressed areas frequently inundated with crime is essential for achieving the goal of sustained economic revitalization. In response to the Vice President's request and in recognition of the need to address public safety concerns, OJJDP, COPS, and DOJ's Community Relations Service began working together to develop a youth-focused community policing program that could be implemented in the communities participating in the EZ/EC initiative. Their efforts produced the Youth-Focused Community Policing initiative.

The Youth-Focused Community Policing Initiative

Youth-Focused Community Policing (YFCP) is intended to help integrate youth into the community, provide alternatives to delinquency and drug abuse and, consequently, contribute to reducing crime, disorder, and fear. It is a community-based, collaborative effort that recognizes the importance of developing a locally driven response to a locally based problem. Through YFCP, justice and human service agencies are working together to identify youth-related issues and concerns that are unique to their own community. With the aid of training and technical assistance, communities then develop effective responses and solutions that meet community needs and recognize community resources and limitations.

YFCP has several specific goals:

- ◆ Promote community strategies for sharing information to support comprehensive, proactive partnerships between police, youth, and the community.

¹ The Empowerment Zone and Enterprise Community Initiative, established by President Clinton in August 1993, was designed to create jobs and revitalize economies in distressed urban and rural areas. More than 100 communities were designated to receive Federal tax incentives and Federal block grants under this initiative. Six urban and three rural Empowerment Zones (EZ's) each have received between \$40 million and \$100 million in block grants; 4 Enhanced Enterprise Communities (EEC's) each have received developmental grants of \$22 million; 2 Supplemental Empowerment Zones (SEZ's) have received between \$90 million and \$125 million each in economic development grants, and 95 Enterprise Communities (EC's) have received block grant funding of approximately \$3 million each. The Youth-Focused Community Policing initiative was offered to nine EZ's, two SEZ's, and four EEC's.

- ◆ Establish a locally based interagency working group to identify and address juvenile crime, victimization, community public safety, and quality-of-life issues.
- ◆ Develop and implement strategies, activities, and services that are consistent with the principles of community policing and address locally defined problems relating to juvenile crime, victimization, and quality-of-life issues.
- ◆ Develop a YFCP implementation plan that reinforces ongoing relationships among youth, law enforcement, and community organizations.

DOJ has provided individualized training, technical assistance, and programmatic resources to eight EZ and Enhanced Enterprise Community (EEC) jurisdictions to fund YFCP initiatives in their communities. These efforts include:

- ◆ Assisting communities in developing new needs assessment instruments or enhancing existing ones.
- ◆ Conducting resource assessments of youth programs and services.
- ◆ Helping organize and mobilize community organizations around youth issues.
- ◆ Facilitating interagency and confidentiality agreements concerning information sharing about youth.
- ◆ Developing management information systems.
- ◆ Conducting training workshops.
- ◆ Analyzing crime statistics, trend data, and other information related to youth and community risk factors.

YFCP Implementation

YFCP is being implemented in three phases. During phase I, which was completed in spring 1996, participating EZ/EEC's attended multidisciplinary work sessions, where they were introduced to the key concepts of YFCP and taught to apply problem-solving strategies to youth crime issues. In phase II, which was initiated in fall 1997, participating EZ/EEC's received ongoing training and technical assistance to assess current problems and needs, mobilize community resources, facilitate information sharing, develop management information systems, analyze crime trends and data, and develop locally directed and driven plans and strategies for addressing youth crime and victimization issues. Training and technical assistance



were provided by Fox Valley Technical College, OJJDP's YFCP technical assistance provider. In phase III, which began in 1998, the participating EZ/EEC's received funds to implement and evaluate their YFCP strategies. DOJ awarded grants to and continues to fund the following EZ/EEC communities under the YFCP initiative: Boston, MA; Chicago, IL; Houston, TX; Kansas City, KS; Los Angeles, CA; Mound Bayou, MS; Oakland, CA; and Rio Grande Valley, TX. Examples of the activities and initiatives being supported through YFCP in five of these cities are described below.

Boston

In Boston, the Mayor's Office is working closely with the Boston Police Department and the U.S. Attorney's Office to implement a YFCP project that uses community policing strategies to identify high-risk youth and link them to the labor market in two geographic areas: Dorchester and South Boston. These two communities were identified because they have significant rates of juvenile crime and victimization. The Dorchester area, which includes Bowdoin Street, Four Corners, Fields Corner, and Codman Square, is one of the three areas in Boston that have experienced the greatest impact from crime and gangs. It has a high student dropout rate and a large population of youth committed to the Massachusetts Department of Youth Services. South Boston has witnessed a significant decrease in blue-collar jobs, persistent poverty, and large numbers of single-parent families.

Boston's YFCP initiative is linked with several other Boston programs that address youth violence, including Operation Cease-Fire and the Youth Violence Strike Force. Youth who are typically not

served through other traditional job development and employment programs are given the opportunity to participate in the YFCP job training and development project. In Dorchester, law enforcement and criminal justice personnel work with streetworkers, clergy, and other youth agencies, encouraging them to become recruiters and referral agents for high-risk youth who can benefit from the program. Candidates are referred to three-person teams for job readiness skills development, training, alternative education, counseling, support, referral services, and job placement. In South Boston, the target group is youth who are engaging in truancy, criminal behavior, substance abuse, or other problem behaviors. The goal in South Boston is to reengage youth by giving them paid work or community service placements, adult mentors, alternative education, and intensive support. Federal funds provide stipends for youth to work for up to 52 weeks.

The Boston YFCP initiative will track and report on the number of:

- ◆ Youth recruited.
- ◆ Youth who successfully complete Private Industry Council (PIC) job training.
- ◆ Youth placed in community service jobs.
- ◆ Youth who stay in jobs.
- ◆ Mentors recruited.
- ◆ Employers participating in the initiative.

Additionally, the Boston initiative will track the number of youth reentering school and the reoffense rates of youth

previously in the juvenile justice system as compared with youth involved in the juvenile justice system who are not participating in the program.

Chicago

The focus of Chicago's YFCP initiative is to develop and implement a training program to encourage and increase youth participation in the city's community oriented policing activities. The program is designed to develop resiliency by teaching youth to promote and preserve relationships, adapt to change or misfortune, control their behavior, make good choices, and value trust.

The YFCP initiative has brought together the Chicago for Youth Office and Chicago's community policing effort in three specific communities: Englewood in the 7th Police District, Pilsen in the 12th Police District, and Kennicott Park in the 21st Police District. The Chicago for Youth Office is responsible for administering the city's YouthNet Centers, which began in 1995 with six pilot centers. YouthNet is a network of youth development sites that function as safe havens where young people and their families can access a variety of services and opportunities. These include, but are not limited to, parenting and problem-solving skills training, community health seminars, counseling, mentoring, and tutoring. Because a key YouthNet goal is to develop a close working relationship with police at the local level, the centers have been located using police district boundaries.

Houston

In Houston, the Mayor's Office, Houston Police Department, and U.S. Attorney's Office together have identified several systemwide changes that are needed to enhance the operation and management of the juvenile and criminal justice system, support and link various Federal initiatives (including Operation Weed and Seed² and OJJDP's Comprehensive Strategy³), and promote prevention and early intervention for juvenile offenders.

² Operation Weed and Seed, sponsored by DOJ's Executive Office for Weed and Seed, is a comprehensive law enforcement and community investment strategy designed to help make communities safer and more attractive to other social and economic resources. A multiagency strategy to "weed out" violent crime, gang activity, drug use, and drug trafficking in targeted high-crime neighborhoods, Operation Weed and Seed also "seeds" the target area by helping to restore those neighborhoods through social and economic revitalization.

Several focus groups that included youth were held to identify issues associated with the identified problem area. The goals of Houston's YFCP initiative are to:

- ◆ Improve interagency collaboration.
- ◆ Address fragmented data sources.
- ◆ Remove legal barriers to information sharing.
- ◆ Eliminate service duplication.
- ◆ Enhance service coordination.
- ◆ Develop a formal structure and process for interagency collaboration.
- ◆ Identify processes and data systems for resource collection and dissemination.

The city is also designing and implementing a new systemwide data-sharing network to link agencies and to collect data and share information more efficiently. Houston has already established an Early Intervention Response/Planning Team to use these data to identify at-risk youth and their families and provide them with the services and interventions they need.

Kansas City

High rates of juvenile crime and homicide are critical issues facing Kansas City. The Kansas City (Kansas) Police Department (KCKPD), Department of Probation, Youth Advisory Task Force, and Youth Policy Board are working together to develop more effective methods and approaches to prevent crime and intervene with juvenile offenders. Efforts include expanding community policing, improving resource allocation, and enhancing community-based responses to crime and victimization.

The focus of the Kansas City YFCP initiative is twofold. First, the police department, in collaboration with the probation department, is replicating Boston's Night Light program. Night Light is an intensive police/probation field supervision and monitoring program that targets high-risk youth. Second, KCKPD is undertaking a series of internal system changes and

³ The Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders is a community-focused, research-based response to the problem of juvenile delinquency. Research suggests that the most effective way to affect juvenile delinquency is a comprehensive approach that coordinates prevention efforts with the juvenile justice system's response to criminal behavior. The Comprehensive Strategy builds on the knowledge that prevention involving all sectors of the community that touch the lives of youth (e.g., family, school, and peer group) is the most effective and cost-efficient approach to reducing juvenile delinquency.

enhancements to improve the law enforcement response to juvenile crime and victimization, including:

- ◆ Developing a juvenile and youth database and crime analysis system to collect crime and victimization information.
- ◆ Examining how resources are allocated and workload is deployed to improve service delivery and response.

Los Angeles

In Los Angeles, the Commission on Children, Youth and Their Families has brought together an unprecedented coalition of agencies that includes the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, the Los Angeles Police Department, the Children's Planning Council of Los Angeles County, and the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). These agencies are working together with youth to implement an interagency, communitywide process to more effectively address problems related to youth crime, violence, victimization, and the quality of life in neighborhoods.

Based on information collected through a needs assessment conducted by the Commission on Children, Youth and Their Families in collaboration with the Los Angeles Police Commission, the Children's Planning Council, and LAUSD, the Los Angeles YFCP initiative seeks to establish a practical, sustainable, multidisciplinary structure for dealing with youth crime, delinquency, and victimization. The structure is being designed to protect the public and teach responsibility through targeted prevention, improved intervention, and increased accountability for youth. Because Los Angeles County is so large, the 27 LAUSD clusters⁴ have been organized into community planning teams with local representation from the multidisciplinary steering committee. Each cluster is establishing a planning foundation that will:

- ◆ Strengthen and expand current youth, community, and police partnerships.
- ◆ Draw upon a wide range of existing community resources, including the private sector, through better coordination and information sharing.

⁴ LAUSD facilitates its management of schools by using the designation cluster to identify areas in the 708 square miles it controls in both the city and county of Los Angeles. Each cluster includes from one to three high schools and all of the middle and elementary schools that support them.

- ◆ Develop responses to problems that are matched to assets and needs within the cluster.
- ◆ Establish the infrastructure to use problem-solving information,⁵ community resources, communication, and partnership.

Conclusion

YFCP initiatives help to improve a community's response to juvenile crime by helping establish a comprehensive collaborative approach to problem solving. The participating EZ/EEC's have used a systematic process of assessing and identifying local juvenile issues and concerns and then identifying effective community responses. These communities are developing and implementing a variety of strategies and approaches for addressing youth-related issues that reflect the unique features of each community while demonstrating the importance of a collaborative problem-solving approach.

⁵ Problem-solving information may include a wide range of indicators of community problems. These can be law enforcement data such as calls for service or crime incident data; community, business, media, or youth opinions; or public services information such as Department of Parks and Recreation reports on the number of youth wanting to participate in a limited number of basketball or soccer programs, Child Protective Services reports on cases of malnourished children, or school reports on the number of truants per day.

For Further Information

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